

February 24, 2021

Dear Senate and Health Care Committees,

My name is Kristin Koppert and I have been a patient of three different naturopaths over the last ten years, each with their own area of expertise. I would like to share my experience working with them to show you why these professionals are important and deserve equal pay to their peers with similar certifications.

I am only 32 years old, but I have a handful of chronic illnesses and I have seen upwards of fifteen specialists in my lifetime. I am overly familiar with the medical system and with the many different certified professionals in the field. The care I've gotten from my NDs is by far the best care I've ever received.

In a conventional medical setting, I commonly get anywhere from 5-20 minutes with the doctor, get rushed out before addressing all of my questions, and leave feeling unheard and with a bandaid solution to my concerns. When I see a naturopath, I get 45-60 minutes, get to dig into all of my concerns, get listened to closely, and really investigate the root of my health issues. They offer me remedies and treatment options far beyond a pill (although that remains an option when necessary). They have the same connections to doctors in the area as conventional doctors and refer out as needed. They offer everything an MD, DO, NP, or PA does, plus some. They help their patients seek true health and recovery, so that we can be a less "active" member in the medical world, and ultimately save insurance companies money.

The naturopaths I have seen have helped me heal my gut and get into remission from ulcerative colitis. They have helped me manage my anxiety and OCD. They have helped me with fertility and conception, when an MD said there was nothing they could do. They have helped me through an entire pregnancy and the most beautiful and empowering delivery. They have even cared for my son as a pediatrician.

I have recommended friends and family meet with a naturopath after hearing report after report of lack of help from the MDs they saw. Every time they came back to me with reports like,

"I've never felt so respected by a doctor,"

"I've never felt so understood and listened to. I felt like she really listened to my health history and took everything into account as she made recommendations for me."

"I hope even when I move, I can keep seeing my naturopath."

"They helped me when my regular doctor couldn't."

Why would a doctor who provides such intentional care, such an extensive amount of time with their patients, holds a wealth of knowledge and training, and can provide the same treatments and recommendations as other professionals, plus more, not get paid as well as their peers?

I am asking that you please vote YES on the Naturopathic Physician Pay Parity bill.

Sincerely,

Kristin Koppert